


### III. Remarks

Claims 1 – 44 are pending. Claims 9, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27, 32, 35, 36, and 40 have been amended in accordance with the U.S. rules of practice and not for reasons relating to patentability. The filing fee has been calculated according to the above-amendments.

Claims 1 – 44 are under consideration in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, an early action on the merits is respectfully requested.

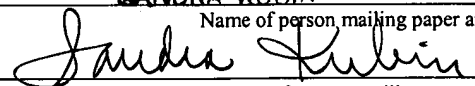
The examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Date: 10 February, 2005

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